



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
*FOIA Service Center*

April 16, 2019

Austin Evers  
American Oversight  
1030 15th Street, Suite B255  
Washington, DC 20002

RE: FOIA Request No. 18-01720-F

Dear Mr. Evers:

This letter is an interim response to your request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, dated July 31, 2018 and received in this office on August 1, 2018. Your request was forwarded to the appropriate offices to search for documents that may be responsive to your request: Office of the Secretary (OS), Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), Office of the Deputy Secretary (ODS), and Office of Communications and Outreach (OCO).

You requested:

- All records reflecting communications (including emails, email attachments, text messages, messages on messaging platforms (such as Slack, GChat or Google Hangouts, Lync, Skype, or WhatsApp), telephone call logs, calendar entries/invitations, meeting notices, meeting agendas, informational material, draft legislation, talking points, any handwritten or electronic notes taken during any oral communications, summaries of any oral communications, or other materials) regarding any actual or potential teacher strike, work stoppage, walk out, large scale absence, protest, or other activism in 2018 and involving any employee in any of the following offices:
  - Office of the Secretary,
  - Office of the Deputy Secretary,
  - Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, and
  - Office of Communications and Outreach.

This response pertains to records available in OCO. Attached to this email are 28 pages of documents responsive your request. The documents provided are:

- Documents pertaining to actual or potential teacher strike, work stoppage, walk out, large scale absence, protest, or other activism in 2018.

However, certain information has been withheld according to FOIA exemptions (b)(5) and (b)(6), specified below:

- Records or portions of records relating to certain intra-agency information is exempt from disclosure pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5) of the FOIA. This exemption permits the withholding of inter- or intra-agency information that could be withheld under civil discovery, including information subject to the deliberative process, attorney-client, or attorney-work product privileges.

- Records or portions of records relating to personal information is exempt pursuant to 5 U.S.C. §552 (b)(6) of the FOIA. Disclosure of this information would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

At this time, the Department is continuing to process your request and your FOIA request case file remains open. It will not close until the Department provides you with a response regarding outstanding responsive documents. Our final release letter will contain information related to your appeal rights of the agency's decisions.

If you have any questions, please contact the FOIA Service Center at (202) 401-8365 or via e-mail at [EDFOIAManager@ed.gov](mailto:EDFOIAManager@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

*Arthur Caliguiran*

Arthur Caliguiran  
FOIA Analyst  
FOIA Service Center

Enclosure

**From:** Hill, Elizabeth  
**Sent:** 20 Feb 2019 17:23:23 +0000  
**To:** Hahn, Nicholas  
**Cc:** Bailey, Nathan  
**Subject:** West VA teacher strike

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.forbes.com/sites/patrickgleason/2019/02/19/west-virginia-demonstrates-how-teachers-unions-oppose-school-choice-as-well-as-tax-relief/amp/>

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Smith, Richard  
**Sent:** 30 Nov 2018 15:00:23 +0000  
**To:** SeniorEmergencyAlert  
**Subject:** Upcoming Protests

(b)(5)

Richard  
Acting Director  
Security, Facilities, and Logistics  
U.S. Department of Education  
(202) 260-8987

**From:** Hill, Elizabeth  
**Sent:** 20 Feb 2019 01:11:09 +0000  
**To:** Bailey, Nathan;Blew, Jim;Snow, McKenzie;Garcia, Daniela  
**Subject:** FW: West Virginia teachers to strike for second day

(b)(5)

Leaders from West Virginia's teachers unions said Tuesday night the state's teachers will strike for a second day on Wednesday — a decision made after a whirlwind day in the state capital...

The decision comes even though the state House earlier in the day [effectively killed a bill](#) the unions strongly oppose by indefinitely postponing its consideration. The comprehensive education package would have brought education savings accounts and charter schools to the state.

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**From:** POLITICO Pro Education [mailto:politicoemail@politicopro.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 19, 2019 8:08 PM  
**To:** Hill, Elizabeth  
**Subject:** West Virginia teachers to strike for second day

## West Virginia teachers to strike for second day

By Kimberly Hefling

02/19/2019 08:06 PM EDT

Leaders from West Virginia's teachers unions said Tuesday night the state's teachers will strike for a second day on Wednesday — a decision made after a whirlwind day in the state capital.

Rank-and-file members wanted to stay out for another day because "there's a trust issue," said Joe White, president of the West Virginia School Service Personnel Association, during a press conference in Charleston and joined by two other union leaders. The three unions represent the state's teachers and school service personnel.

The decision comes even though the state House earlier in the day [effectively killed a bill](#) the unions strongly oppose by indefinitely postponing its consideration. The comprehensive education package would have brought education savings accounts and charter schools to the state.

Dale Lee, president of the West Virginia Education Association, said union members wanted to walk out another day because there's still a "minute opportunity for something to happen" that legislatively brings back the measures they don't like.

Fred Albert, president of the AFT-West Virginia, said a big issue is that the unions cannot "trust the leadership in the Senate."

After the House vote, Republican Senate President Mitch Carmichael — who has pushed for the changes in what he's said is an effort to improve the quality of the state's schools — [tweeted](#): "I am disappointed, but let me be clear: I am not defeated. In the Senate, 'tired of being 50th' isn't just a clever slogan. It's a call for action, and we will act. #WVpol #WVeducation."

West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice, also a Republican, in turn, [urged the teachers](#) to return to classrooms and for the legislature to give a pay raise in a bill that doesn't include the contentious provisions they oppose.

It's the second strike in as many years for West Virginia teachers. Their activism last year sparked teacher unrest in other states, including Oklahoma and Arizona.

*To view online:*

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/education/article/2019/02/west-virginia-teachers-to-strike-for-second-day-1188350>

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**From:** Hill, Elizabeth  
**Sent:** 7 Feb 2019 14:59:34 +0000  
**To:** Bailey, Nathan;Blew, Jim;Snow, McKenzie;Eitel, Robert;Oppenheim, Peter  
**Cc:** Aquila, Michael;Mansour II, Mark;Broadwater, Sara  
**Subject:** FW: House education panel sets hearing on K-12 underfunding

For situational awareness

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**From:** POLITICO Pro Education Whiteboard [mailto:politicoemail@politicopro.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 07, 2019 9:54 AM  
**To:** Hill, Elizabeth  
**Subject:** House education panel sets hearing on K-12 underfunding

By Kimberly Hefling

02/07/2019 09:52 AM EDT

The House Committee on Education and Labor announced today that it will hold a hearing on Tuesday on the funding struggles in public K-12 education.

The committee said the hearing will be titled "Underpaid Teachers and Crumbling Schools: How Underfunding Public Education Shortchanges America's Students," but provided no other details in an online posting, such as who would be testifying.

Rep. [Bobby Scott](#) (D-Va.), the chairman of the committee, has said improving school infrastructure is a priority, and last week he put forth a [\\$100 billion proposal](#), [H.R. 865 \(116\)](#), to update America's aging school buildings.

The hearing comes amid a second wave of teacher strikes over issues such as pay and classroom conditions, following walkouts last year that were largely concentrated in states that have struggled to bring K-12 spending back to levels before the Great Recession. The latest is in Denver, where teachers [have announced](#) they will strike on Monday over the district's salary compensation system.

The hearing will be at 10:15 a.m. in 2175 Rayburn.

*To view online:*

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/education/whiteboard/2019/02/house-education-panel-sets-hearing-on-k-12-underfunding-2644511>

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Landis, Patricia

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 20, 2018 11:27 AM  
**To:** Bakely, Cole  
**CC:** Honeysett, Adam  
**Subject:** RE: WV teacher strike

Just an fyi, but would really appreciate it if the team could keep an eye on this as it develops.

Thanks guys!

Sincerely,

**Cody Reynolds**

Liaison for Intergovernmental Affairs  
Office of Communications and Outreach  
U.S. Department of Education

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**From:** Bailey, Nathan  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 20, 2018 10:52 AM  
**To:** Reynolds, Cody; Ferguson, Gillum  
**Subject:** WV teacher strike

Let's keep an eye on how this develops

**WEST VIRGINIA TEACHERS, THREATENING STRIKE, SET TO WALK OUT THIS WEEK:** Teachers and school personnel across West Virginia are planning to walk out on Thursday and Friday as tensions remain high over pay and benefits. The statewide walkout would be the first in the state's history, according to the Charleston Gazette-Mail. Rank-and-file members of West Virginia's two main unions, AFT-West Virginia and the West Virginia Education Association, have given leaders in both unions authority to call a strike, which would be the first statewide teacher strike in West Virginia since 1990.

— **Union leaders are continuing discussions with state lawmakers to work out a solution**, Christine Campbell, the president of the AFT in West Virginia, told Morning Education. She said teachers in the state haven't had a pay increase since 2014, and during this period health care costs have risen, along with the cost of living. Campbell noted that the state's teachers are among the lowest paid nationally, and she said the problems have been building for years.

— **"That kind of pay raise is not going to get us out of 48th or 49th place," Campbell said**, explaining why teachers aren't satisfied with proposals on the table. Campbell said states bordering West Virginia pay teachers \$5,000 to \$20,000 more on average, which has led to more than 700 teacher vacancies in the state. "People can't afford to stay here. They are crossing into bordering states because that's the only way they can make a living wage."

**Landis, Patricia**

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**From:** Zarish-Becknell, Kim  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2018 9:29 AM  
**To:** Honeysett, Adam; Reynolds, Cody  
**Cc:** McHam, Gerren  
**Subject:** RE: OK strike

I didn't see that – thanks for sharing

Kim Zarish-Becknell, Esq.  
Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs  
U.S. Department of Education

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**From:** Honeysett, Adam  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2018 9:23 AM  
**To:** Reynolds, Cody; Zarish-Becknell, Kim  
**Cc:** McHam, Gerren  
**Subject:** RE: OK strike

Just making sure you saw: Oklahoma extended its testing window by a week.

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2018 9:22 AM  
**To:** Zarish-Becknell, Kim  
**Cc:** Honeysett, Adam; McHam, Gerren  
**Subject:** Re: OK strike

I have been in touch with some folks on the ground. Will provide an update shortly. On a different call now.

-Cody

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 9, 2018, at 9:19 AM, Zarish-Becknell, Kim <[Kim.Zarish-Becknell@ed.gov](mailto:Kim.Zarish-Becknell@ed.gov)> wrote:

We are getting a bunch of hill questions about what ED will do if assessments are not administered due to the strike. BDV has a call with Sen. Lankford tonight and this will come up.

Have you guys been fielding questions about this, and if yes, what have we said publicly?

thanks

Kim Zarish-Becknell, Esq.  
Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs  
U.S. Department of Education

**Landis, Patricia**

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**From:** Bailey, Nathan  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2018 4:09 PM  
**To:** Zarish-Becknell, Kim; Hill, Elizabeth  
**Cc:** Oppenheim, Peter; McHam, Gerren; Reynolds, Cody; Honeysett, Adam  
**Subject:** RE: OK assessments

Thanks Kim, and will do. We have not said nothing publicly yet, and if we did, it would likely be in the form of a press release (where we'd loop you in for the notifications in advance).

---

**From:** "Zarish-Becknell, Kim" <[Kim.Zarish-Becknell@ed.gov](mailto:Kim.Zarish-Becknell@ed.gov)>  
**Date:** Monday, April 9, 2018 at 3:35 PM  
**To:** Bailey Nathan <[nathan.bailey@ed.gov](mailto:nathan.bailey@ed.gov)>  
**Cc:** Peter Oppenheim <[Peter.Oppenheim@ed.gov](mailto:Peter.Oppenheim@ed.gov)>, "McHam, Gerren" <[Gerren.McHam@ed.gov](mailto:Gerren.McHam@ed.gov)>, Cody Reynolds <[Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov](mailto:Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov)>, "Honeysett, Adam" <[Adam.Honeysett@ed.gov](mailto:Adam.Honeysett@ed.gov)>  
**Subject:** OK assessments

Hi Nate, we have gotten several questions from the Hill about the OK strike and the potential impact on OK administering their assessments. They've asked a lot of questions, the latest is "will OK lose funding if they don't do their testing this year? And what's the specific process for a situation like this?" Sen. Lankford plans to ask BDV about this on a call they have later today.

As far as I know we have not public weighed in about it yet, but wanted to reach out. Do we plan to say anything publicly? If we do, could you let us know please so we can try to prevent the Hill from being upset with us if something said publicly and we didn't flag it for them.

Kim

Kim Zarish-Becknell, Esq.  
Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs  
U.S. Department of Education

**Landis, Patricia**

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2018 10:18 AM  
**To:** Parker, Stephen  
**Cc:** mwilson@nga.org; Honeysett, Adam  
**Subject:** Secretary Call to Governor Fallin

Good Morning Team NGA,

I just wanted to send an update to let you know that Secretary DeVos had a very productive phone call with Governor Fallin this morning. They discussed the Governor's concerns regarding the Department's ESSA process and the role of the office of the Governor in that process. They also talked about the current situation surrounding the potential OK teacher walkout.

Thank you both again for your partnership and we look forward to continuing to engage with your organization and the Governors.

Sincerely,

**Cody Reynolds**  
Liaison for Intergovernmental Affairs  
Office of Communications and Outreach  
U.S. Department of Education



Landis, Patricia

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**From:** Honeysett, Adam  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2018 9:23 AM  
**To:** Reynolds, Cody; Zarish-Becknell, Kim  
**Cc:** McHam, Gerren  
**Subject:** RE: OK strike

Just making sure you saw: Oklahoma extended its testing window by a week.

---

**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Monday, April 09, 2018 9:22 AM  
**To:** Zarish-Becknell, Kim  
**Cc:** Honeysett, Adam; McHam, Gerren  
**Subject:** Re: OK strike

I have been in touch with some folks on the ground. Will provide an update shortly. On a different call now.

-Cody

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 9, 2018, at 9:19 AM, Zarish-Becknell, Kim <[Kim.Zarish-Becknell@ed.gov](mailto:Kim.Zarish-Becknell@ed.gov)> wrote:

We are getting a bunch of hill questions about what ED will do if assessments are not administered due to the strike. BDV has a call with Sen. Lankford tonight and this will come up.

Have you guys been fielding questions about this, and if yes, what have we said publicly?

thanks

Kim Zarish-Becknell, Esq.  
Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs  
U.S. Department of Education

**Landis, Patricia**

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**From:** Honeysett, Adam  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 27, 2018 11:36 PM  
**To:** Ferguson, Gillum; Burleson, Roman  
**Cc:** Reynolds, Cody; Bakely, Cole  
**Subject:** WV Teacher Strike

West Virginia teachers expected to return to classrooms Thursday as Gov. Jim Justice announces ...  
Washington Post

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. — Striking West Virginia teachers are expected to return to the classroom this week after educators and the state's governor reached a deal on a 5 percent raise. Gov. Jim Justice announced the end of the work stoppage Tuesday at the state Capitol in Charleston, saying ...



Landis, Patricia

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 27, 2018 11:37 PM  
**o:** Honeysett, Adam  
**subject:** Re: WV Teacher Strike

Thanks for keeping an eye on this adam!

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 27, 2018, at 11:35 PM, Honeysett, Adam <[Adam.Honeysett@ed.gov](mailto:Adam.Honeysett@ed.gov)> wrote:

West Virginia teachers expected to return to classrooms Thursday as Gov. Jim Justice announces

...

Washington Post

MARTINSBURG, W.Va. — Striking West Virginia teachers are expected to return to the classroom this week after educators and the state's governor reached a deal on a 5 percent raise. Gov. Jim Justice announced the end of the work stoppage Tuesday at the state Capitol in Charleston, saying ...

Landis, Patricia

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Friday, March 09, 2018 11:50 AM  
**To:** Bailey, Nathan; Chamberlain, Michael; Ramirez, Andrea  
**Subject:** Fwd: Meeting January 25 at EOWH

(b)(5)

-Cody

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Craig Thurmond <(b)(6)@aol.com>  
**Date:** March 9, 2018 at 10:03:09 AM EST  
**To:** [Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov](mailto:Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov)  
**Subject:** Re: RE: RE: Meeting January 25 at EOWH

Cody,

Thanks for following up, the school administration has been real busy as the teachers are planning a walkout if the state legislators do not address their salary and funding issues. The school administration supports the walk out as does the city and a large majority of the community. I will be in DC next week from March 10 to March 17 for the NLC conference, meetings on the Hill and a meeting at the White House. I will get back with the schools when I return home.

Craig Thurmond  
*Mayor of the City of Broken Arrow*  
610 S Main St  
Broken Arrow, Ok 74012  
Office : 918-294-0835  
Fax: 918-294-8854

**"The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office."**

*- Dwight D. Eisenhower*

In a message dated 3/8/2018 5:03:22 PM Central Standard Time, [Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov](mailto:Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov) writes:

Good Afternoon Mayor,

I just wanted to check back in and see how things were progressing in Broken Arrow. Please let me know if you would still like to set up a time for our teams to talk.

Hope you are doing well!

Sincerely,

**Cody Reynolds**

Liaison for Intergovernmental Affairs

Office of Communications and Outreach

U.S. Department of Education

**From:** Craig Thurmond [mailto:(b)(6)@aol.com]

**Sent:** Monday, February 19, 2018 3:26 PM

**To:** Reynolds, Cody

**Subject:** Re: RE: Meeting January 25 at EOWH

Cody,

Thanks for responding. I am trying to set up a conference call with the School Superintendent. It will be a couple of weeks and I will send you questions before.

Craig Thurmond  
*Mayor of the City of Broken Arrow*  
610 S Main St  
Broken Arrow, Ok 74012  
Office : 918-294-0835  
Fax: 918-294-8854

**"The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office."**

*- Dwight D. Eisenhower*

In a message dated 2/16/2018 11:39:04 AM Central Standard Time, [Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov](mailto:Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov) writes:

Good Afternoon Mayor Thurmond,

My sincerest apologies for the delay in my response. For some reason, your email ended up in my spam folder.

Thank you again for reaching out to us and it was a pleasure meeting you at the EEOB a few weeks ago. I would be happy to discuss any questions you and your team may have.

Let me know when might be a good time for us to have a follow up call? This would enable me to introduce you to other members of my team as well as give us the opportunity to try and answer any questions you have. As of now, I have the following availability for next week:

- Wednesday, 2/21 from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- Thursday, 2/22 anytime between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m.
- Friday, 2/23 from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Please let me know if any of these time windows may work for you; if not, I am sure we can find something else. Additionally, if you could send any questions ahead of time, I can make sure to have the appropriate staff member on the call with me, in case I cannot answer the question myself.

Thank you again for reaching out and I look forward to speaking with you again soon!

Sincerely,

**Cody Reynolds**

Liaison for Intergovernmental Affairs

Office of Communications and Outreach

U.S. Department of Education

**From:** Craig Thurmond [mailto:(b)(6).@aol.com]

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 30, 2018 7:12 PM

**To:** Reynolds, Cody

**Subject:** Meeting January 25 at EOWH

Cody,

It was a pleasure to meet you last Wednesday. Thank you for spending so much time talking to me and pointing out who was who that I needed to talk to. I have been talking to our schools and we have questions and comments that I will contact you about. Secretary DeVoss spoke at session that I attended on Thursday at the USCM, it was

good to hear what she had to say. I also discussed the with Congressman Mullin's staff on Thursday about the Higher Ed Bill re authorization, they want input so let me know if there is anything I should bring up to them.

Thanks again,

Regards,

Craig Thurmond  
*Mayor of the City of Broken Arrow*  
610 S Main St  
Broken Arrow, Ok 74012  
Office : 918-294-0835  
Fax: 918-294-8854

**"The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office."**

*- Dwight D. Eisenhower*



Landis, Patricia

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 09, 2018 10:54 AM  
**To:** Ramirez, Andrea  
**Subject:** Re: NC State Superintendent's Statement

Thanks. Yes, I saw his message as well. I also sent the superintendent's contact info to Nate and Sarah D. so they have it if they need it.

-Cody

Sent from my iPhone

On May 9, 2018, at 10:21 AM, Ramirez, Andrea <[Andrea.Ramirez@ed.gov](mailto:Andrea.Ramirez@ed.gov)> wrote:

Heard back from Nate a few min. ago and looks like he responding to the full group. So glad this is working out and am grateful that you had the strategic insight to flag for all.  
Appreciate you.

ARR

Andrea R. Ramirez, Ph.D.

Acting Director, Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiative

U.S. Department of Education

*As we keep future generations in mind, may we honor each child's uniqueness.*

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**From:** Bailey, Nathan

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 09, 2018 10:20 AM

**To:** Reynolds, Cody; Hill, Elizabeth

**Cc:** Ferguson, Gillum; Stauffer, Evelyn; Ramirez, Andrea; Burleson, Roman

**Subject:** Re: NC State Superintendent's Statement

Thanks for raising this. Working to get the call on the schedule

---

**From:** Cody Reynolds <[Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov](mailto:Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov)>

**Date:** Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at 7:54 AM

**To:** Bailey Nathan <[nathan.bailey@ed.gov](mailto:nathan.bailey@ed.gov)>, "Hill, Elizabeth" <[Liz.Hill@ed.gov](mailto:Liz.Hill@ed.gov)>

**Cc:** Gillum Ferguson <[Gillum.Ferguson@ed.gov](mailto:Gillum.Ferguson@ed.gov)>, Evelyn Stauffer <[evelyn.stauffer@ed.gov](mailto:evelyn.stauffer@ed.gov)>, Andrea Ramirez <[andrea.ramirez@ed.gov](mailto:andrea.ramirez@ed.gov)>, Roman Burleson <[roman.burleson@ed.gov](mailto:roman.burleson@ed.gov)>

**Subject:** NC State Superintendent's Statement

FYI - passing along because his stance on the NC teacher protests closely mirrors that of the Secretary's. Could be a reason for a call.

See below for more info.

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## **North Carolina State Superintendent Denounces Teacher Protest During School Hours.**

The Raleigh (NC) News & Observer (5/8, 464K) reports North Carolina state "Schools Superintendent Mark Johnson is criticizing the decision to hold next week's teacher protest in Raleigh during school hours, saying he won't attend and that he hopes more school districts won't close that day." The North Carolina Association of Educators, "which publicly snubbed Johnson by not inviting him to speak at the group's annual convention this year," organized the event "to lobby state lawmakers for better pay and working conditions." At least 13 districts have announced plans to close on May 16 for the protest because "so many teachers" are planning to



attend. In a Tuesday afternoon tweet, "Johnson questioned the timing of the march," saying it "can be just as effective during non-school hours." Johnson also defended state lawmakers "by pointing to the pay raises that helped lift average teacher pay in the state to more than \$50,000 for the first time this year."

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Sincerely,

-Cody  
Sent from my iPhone

Landis, Patricia

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**From:** Ferguson, Gillum  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 10:32 AM  
**To:** Bailey, Nathan; Reynolds, Cody  
**Subject:** FW: West Virginia's teachers walk off the job, schools close

FYI

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**From:** POLITICO Pro Education Whiteboard [mailto:politicoemail@politicopro.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 22, 2018 10:17 AM  
**To:** Ferguson, Gillum  
**Subject:** West Virginia's teachers walk off the job, schools close

By Kimberly Hefling

02/22/2018 10:15 AM EDT

West Virginia's teachers walked off the job today, defying a law that says it's illegal for them to strike and forcing the closure of schools in all 55 counties.

The teachers and education support staff who joined them on the two-day walkout say they weren't satisfied by a bill signed Wednesday night by Gov. Jim Justice. It would give teachers a 2 percent raise starting this fall for the 2018-2019 school year, and a 1 percent raise each year for the next two years.

The state's teachers are among the lowest paid in the country, with the average teacher salary at \$44,701, according to the National Education Association. The teachers are frustrated with rising health care costs, and say the boost doesn't make up for the lack of a pay raise since 2014.

It's the first statewide teacher walkout in West Virginia since 1990.

Justice said in a [statement](#) that the Legislature "did the responsible thing." He noted that steps were also taken to freeze health care premiums and benefits for 16 months.

"We certainly recognize our teachers are underpaid and this is a step in the right direction to addressing their pay issue," Justice said.

On Wednesday, Attorney General Patrick Morrisey called the action an "illegal work stoppage" and said his office was prepared to "uphold the law."

Dale Lee, the president of the West Virginia Education Association, has said the members know there could be legal consequences, but "the Legislature continues to move punitive bills and fuel their anger."

*To view online:*

<https://www.politicopro.com/education/whiteboard/2018/02/west-virginias-teachers-walk-off-the-job-schools-close-658250>

Was this Pro content helpful? Tell us what you think in one click.



Yes, very



Somewhat



Neutral



Not really



Not at all

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**Landis, Patricia**

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**From:** Rinkus, Christopher  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 5:41 PM  
**To:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Subject:** FW: BP for Call with Gov. Fallin  
**Attachments:** CallBriefing\_Gov.FallinBDV\_3-13-18.CR Edits.docx

Hey cody – I don't think you were on this chain— wanted to let you know that the final BP was sent to OS

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**From:** Rinkus, Christopher  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 5:29 PM  
**To:** Davis, Martha; Botel, Jason; Norris, Elizabeth  
**Cc:** Lee, Ebony; Simmons, Lee (Dougie); Delahunty, Sarah; Coxen, Carrie  
**Subject:** RE: BP for Call with Gov. Fallin

Please see attached

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**From:** Davis, Martha  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 4:45 PM  
**To:** Botel, Jason; Rinkus, Christopher; Norris, Elizabeth  
**Cc:** Lee, Ebony; Simmons, Lee (Dougie); Delahunty, Sarah; Coxen, Carrie  
**Subject:** FW: BP for Call with Gov. Fallin

Team OESE, can you please provide info as soon as possible? This needs to be in the Secretary's book this evening.  
Thanks!

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 4:43 PM  
**To:** Davis, Martha  
**Cc:** Coxen, Carrie; Simmons, Lee (Dougie); Bailey, Nathan; Nations, Kayla; Botel, Jason; Rinkus, Christopher  
**Subject:** BP for Call with Gov. Fallin

Good Afternoon All,

Please find the briefing paper, and three attachments, attached to this email. (Note: Attachments A & C are hyperlinks embedded into the BP)

Please note that this BP does not include information from OESE.

Sincerely,

**Cody Reynolds**  
Liaison for Intergovernmental Affairs  
Office of Communications and Outreach  
U.S. Department of Education

All text should be 12-point Times New Roman and bold, italics or underlined as presented below.

**BRIEFING FOR SECRETARY BETSY DEVOS  
CALL WITH GOVERNOR MARY FALLIN (R-OK)**

Thursday, March 15, 2018

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. EDT

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. CDT

Dial-in: (b)(6) Code: (b)(6)

***Staff Contact: Cody Reynolds, 202-256-6827***

**OVERVIEW:**

You will participate in an introductory call with Governor Mary Fallin and discuss the U.S. Department of Education's process for reviewing the State's ESSA plan, as well as the potential, upcoming Oklahoma teacher walkout. We expect this to be a one-on-one call with no additional attendees.

**PURPOSE:**

(b)(5)

**BACKGROUND:**

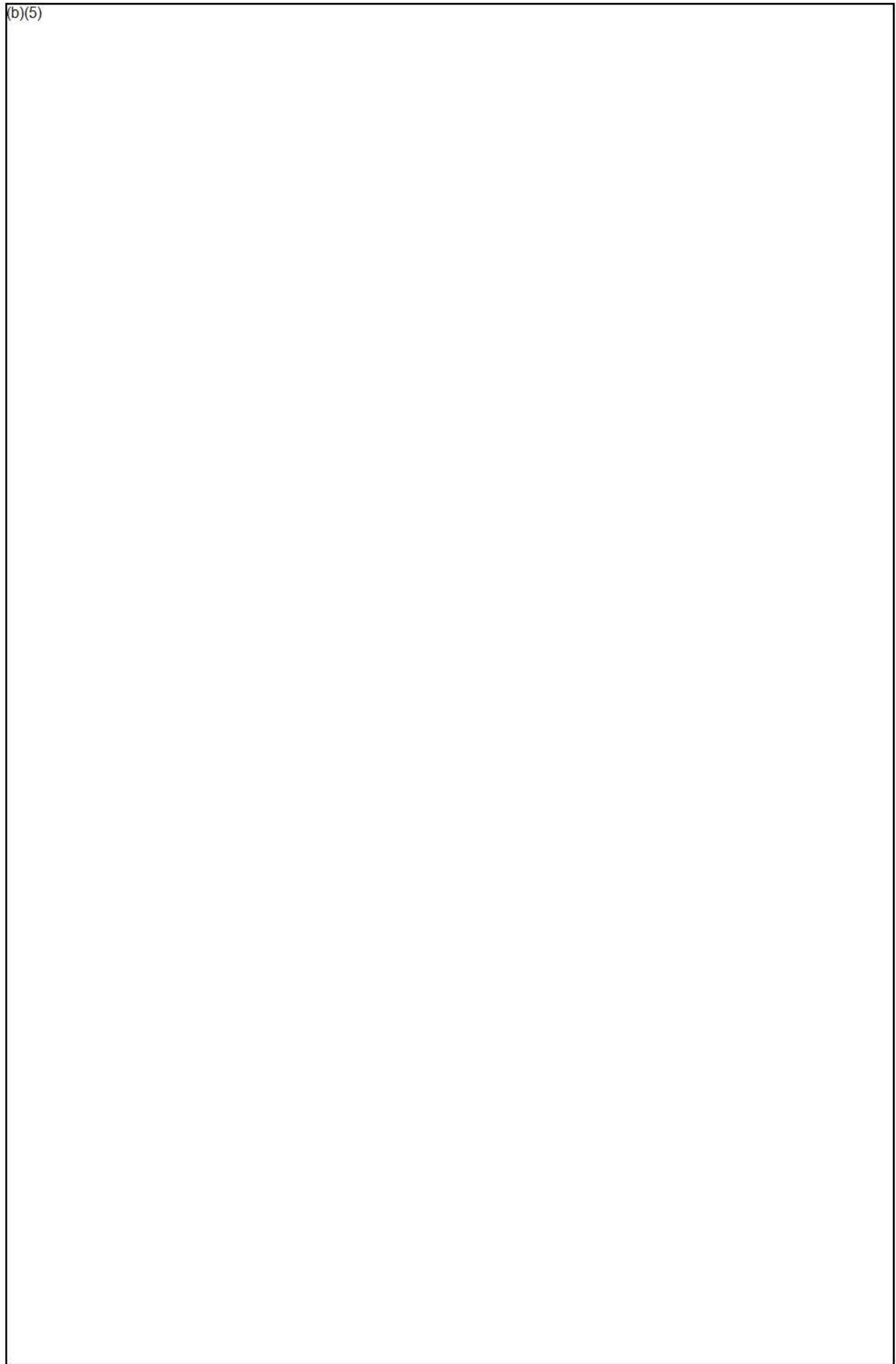
***Role of Governors in the ESSA Process***

(b)(5)

(b)(5)



(b)(5)



**DIAL-IN INFORMATION:**

Dial-in:

Direct Dial:

(b)(6)

Code: (b)(6)

**BIOGRAPHY:**



**Governor Mary Fallin (R-OK)**

- Mary Copeland Fallin has served as Oklahoma's 27<sup>th</sup> Governor since 2011 and is the first woman to hold the position.
- In 2014, Governor Fallin was reelected by a 15-point margin and carried 71 of the state's 77 counties.
- During her tenure as Governor, the state has increased funding for K-12 education by more than \$154 million.
- As the former Chairwoman of the National Governor's Association, Governor Fallin was responsible for leading a nation-wide initiative called "America Works: Education and Training for Tomorrow's Jobs" which sought to better align education with twenty-first century workforce needs.
- In April of 2015, Governor Fallin signed into law a measure that expanded charter schools statewide, which represented a change from the previous state law that only allowed charter schools to operate in Tulsa County or Oklahoma County.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment A, entitled "As DeVos Approves Education Plans, She Finds Skeptics in GOP Governors," is a New York Times article that provides a description of many of the Governor's concerns about the Department's ESSA review process.
- Attachment B, entitled: "OK State Plan Interim Letter" is a copy of the form letter sent to both Superintendent Hofmeister and Governor Fallin, along with the Department's initial feedback on the OK State Plan.
- Attachment C, entitled: "Oklahoma Teachers Consider a Strike after State House Fails to Fund Raises" is a recent news article that accurately summarizes the situation that has created the potential for a teacher walkout in Oklahoma.

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Landis, Patricia

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**From:** Reynolds, Cody  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 09, 2018 9:54 AM  
**To:** Botel, Jason  
**cc:** Grant, Damaris  
**Subject:** Fwd: NC State Superintendent's Statement

Just an FYI that I passed this on to Nate and Liz this a.m.

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(b)(5)

See below for more info.

**North Carolina State Superintendent Denounces Teacher Protest During School Hours.**

The Raleigh (NC) News & Observer (5/8, 464K) reports North Carolina state "Schools Superintendent Mark Johnson is criticizing the decision to hold next week's teacher protest in Raleigh during school hours, saying he won't attend and that he hopes more school districts won't close that day." The North Carolina Association of Educators, "which publicly snubbed Johnson by not inviting him to speak at the group's annual convention this year," organized the event "to lobby state lawmakers for better pay and working conditions." At least 13 districts have announced plans to close on May 16 for the protest because "so many teachers" are planning to attend. In a Tuesday afternoon tweet, "Johnson questioned the timing of the march," saying it "can be just as effective during non-school hours." Johnson also defended state lawmakers "by pointing to the pay raises that helped lift average teacher pay in the state to more than \$50,000 for the first time this year."

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-Cody

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov](mailto:Cody.Reynolds@ed.gov)  
**Date:** May 9, 2018 at 7:54:17 AM EDT  
**To:** [Nathan.Bailey@ed.gov](mailto:Nathan.Bailey@ed.gov), [Liz.Hill@ed.gov](mailto:Liz.Hill@ed.gov)  
**Cc:** [Gillum.Ferguson@ed.gov](mailto:Gillum.Ferguson@ed.gov), [Evelyn.Stauffer@ed.gov](mailto:Evelyn.Stauffer@ed.gov), [Andrea.Ramirez@ed.gov](mailto:Andrea.Ramirez@ed.gov),  
[Roman.Burleson@ed.gov](mailto:Roman.Burleson@ed.gov)  
**Subject:** NC State Superintendent's Statement

FYI - passing along because his stance on the NC teacher protests closely mirrors that of the Secretary's. Could be a reason for a call.

See below for more info.

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**North Carolina State Superintendent Denounces Teacher Protest During School Hours.**

The Raleigh (NC) News & Observer (5/8, 464K) reports North Carolina state "Schools Superintendent Mark Johnson is criticizing the decision to hold next week's teacher protest in Raleigh during school hours, saying he won't attend and that he hopes more school districts won't close that day." The North Carolina Association of Educators, "which publicly snubbed Johnson by not inviting him to speak at the group's annual convention this year," organized the event "to lobby state lawmakers for better pay and working conditions." At least 13 districts have announced plans to close on May 16 for the protest because "so many teachers" are planning to attend. In a Tuesday afternoon tweet, "Johnson questioned the timing of the march," saying it "can be just as effective during non-school hours." Johnson also defended state lawmakers "by pointing to the pay raises that helped lift average teacher pay in the state to more than \$50,000 for the first time this year."

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Sincerely,

-Cody

Sent from my iPhone